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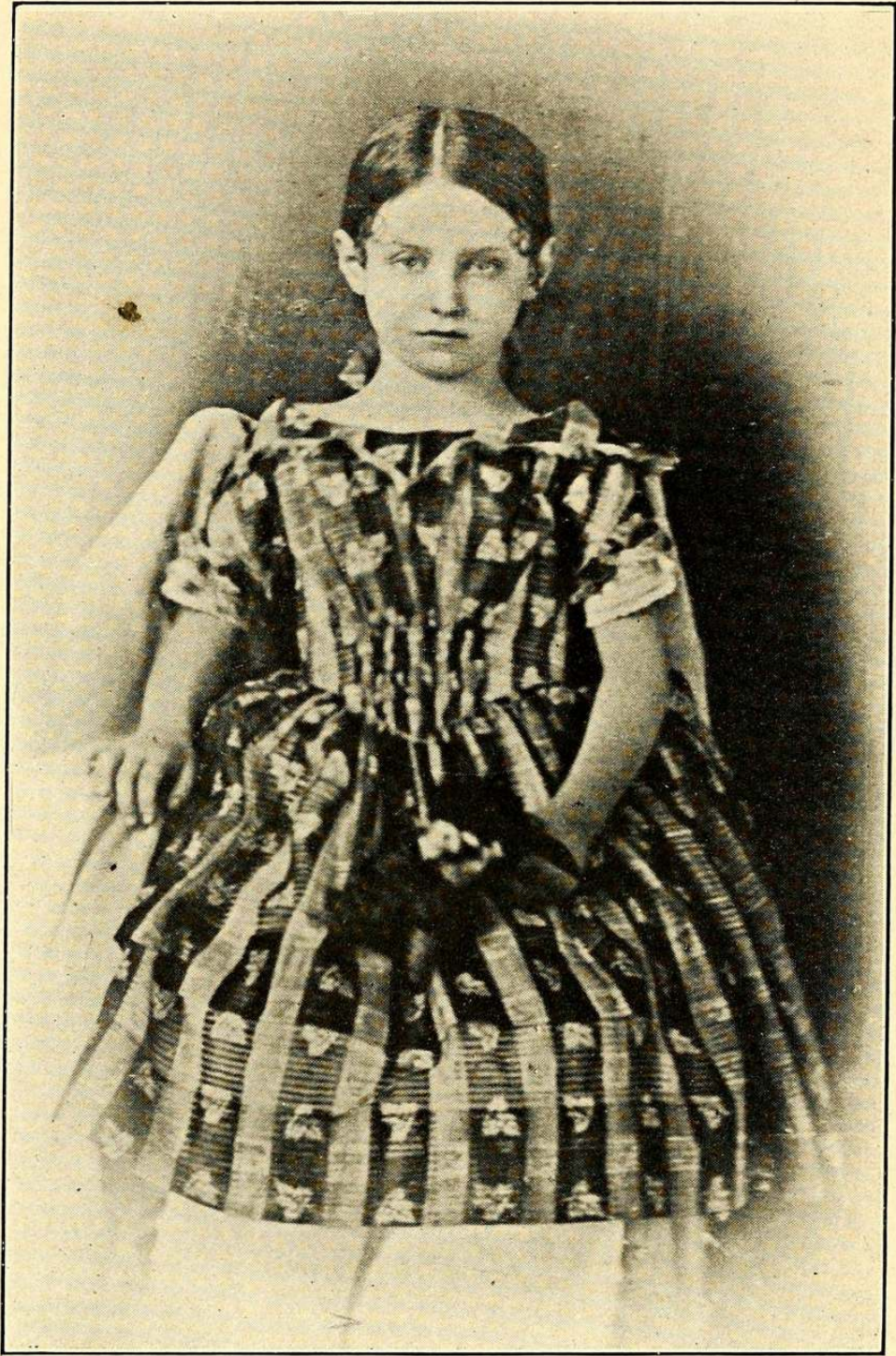
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From a Picture of the Writer Taken in 1846.



# A GRANDMOTHER'S RECOLLECTION OF DIXIE

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By MARY NORCOTT BRYAN.

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Dedicated to my daughters who are my  
companions. To my sons who are my  
counsellors, and to my grand-children  
who are my delight.

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Fond hearts and true, I give this little book to you,  
A tender token to you all so far away—  
It matters not that distance lies between,  
That days, and months, must intervene, before  
your face I see,—  
This little booklet that I send to all,  
Is the best token that my heart's dear love can call

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OWEN G. DUNN,  
PRINTER,  
NEW BERN, N. C.

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## LETTER I.

**M**Y DEAR CHILDREN:—Being at leisure now, after many years of pleasant work in helping your Father to raise a large family of boys and girls, I sit down in this dear old room, with the faces of those I love smiling down upon me from the picture frames on the wall, and the perfume of sweet flowers coming through the lattice door, to recall some recollections of old times in Dixie.

First stands out in bold relief the delightful plantation life at Woodlawn. This phase of society is a thing of the past, and I grieve that you will never know the tender tie that existed between mistress and servant. To the credit of the colored people be it said that during the Civil War, when on plantation after plantation the mansions were occupied only by wives and daughters, not a disloyal act or word ever occurred.

One of the first things I remember was when a little girl of four, seated on a pillow in front of my father, a pale dark man, riding through the corn fields, watching the cotton and corn unfold, and grow beneath our warm Southern sun. Most of the plantations had names according to the owner. Our plantation, named Woodlawn, consisted of four thousand acres, and was beautifully situated between a river and creek. Our man Tony would row us for hours, winding up and down this beautiful stream and around an island covered with dense foliage, and on which there was plenty of small game. The meadow land was near on which grazed a large herd of cows and sheep. Old Shade Allen, an imported bull, was a perfect terror to our

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childish hearts, so large and fierce was he. Many pounds of butter was carried to market every week by Tony, and so fine it was that it always brought a higher price than any other.

The interchange of visits to other plantations was most agreeable, especially at Christmas time—we were always sure of a cordial welcome, the servants were so well trained there was no confusion. The maids looked very attractive wearing their white caps and aprons.

The best was kept for company, everybody was welcomed, what good dinners, large turkeys, old hams, home-made pickles, mince pies, syllabub and calf foot jelly, sweet potatoes which we thought no meal complete without, every delicacy the palate could crave, and with it the kindest welcome to come again.

A little later my trusty pony came in, I would ride him for hours over the country roads, seeking jasmine, woodbine and dogwood with never a fear of anything. No harm ever came to us, our servants would guard their little mistresses and masters entrusted to their care with their lives.

## LETTER II.

DEAR CHILDREN:—

Twice a year we made visits to Fort Barnwell and Hermitage, two noted old plantations belonging to the Simpsons and Biddles. The fondest memories linger around each. I see my old Grandmother with her neat cap strings tied under her chin, a lace cape around her shoulders and a pleasant word for everybody, which meant a great deal of forbearance in the Mistress of a large plantation. Such a busy life was hers, the care of



many slaves, the responsibility of their souls, teaching them truth and honesty, watching over the sick, entertaining strangers. No life of ease I assure you, was that of the Mistress of a large plantation, her purse was ever opened to the distressed, her hospitable doors were never closed.

I well remember the yearly visit the Quakers paid in going from Guilford County to Beaufort. Hermitage was one of their stopping places and their quaint phrasology, "thee and thou," was pleasant to the ear. Once there was a meeting of some Primitive Christians and they were politely entertained, the preacher prayed for "God's blessing on the King of the house and the Queen of the range."

I have spent many happy weeks at Monticello, another old plantation. There was a large lawn in front of the house and two huge live oaks on each side of the gate that led up to the hospitable front door.

Every morning a negro boy rode up on a pony, (the banks which surround the coast of North Carolina are the homes of these sturdy little horses) was handed a bag with the mail, which he took to the nearest postoffice and returned not only with the letters and papers, but with fruit, candy and sweet things which the Postmaster, who also was a confectioner, had a standing order to send. After the war the plantation was in a dilapidated condition, and the owner who had come out of the struggle covered with glory, and little else, walked to town and returned every day, twenty miles, to get the news. He was given the name of dirt-road-walker by the Northern soldiers stationed there. Afterwards he wrote many interesting articles under the non de plume of D. R. Walker.



### LETTER III.

DEAR CHILDREN: In going from Woodlawn to Hermitage, the road ran along the river bank for miles, the embankment was very low, and the water often flowed into the road sometimes making it impassable.

I was always afraid of the water. I remember the only punishment my Father ever gave me was for crying in crossing a mountain stream on an ever memorable journey of three weeks in a carriage to the Virginia Springs.

Sometimes in going on these visits to my Grandparents, the water would not only fill the road but come over the hub of the wheels, and even in the bottom of the carriage. A man in a boat followed the carriage for several miles, and once we were taken from the vehicle and brought in safety to higher lands in a skiff.

Streets's Ferry was a most trying place to my youthful nerves; we would arrive at the Ferry, descend from the carriage, watch Jacob, the driver, go carefully into the flat, unhitch the horses and stand at their heads while we, that is always "my Mother and I," occupied a stand in the rear. Once the horses became frightened, jumped overboard and were with some little difficulty secured in a cove into which they had swam.

Fort Barnwell is named for an old fort built about 1712 to protect our people from the Indians, and named for Colonel Barnwell of South Carolina.

The Indians committed many depredations, among others, shooting a Mr. Stevenson, who, with his



wife and baby, was standing in the door of his little home. As a child I made frequent visits to this moss-covered old fort and picked up shot and shell

General Simpson and his father General John Simpson of Pitt County were strong supporters of the Church of England. After the war this church became very upopular, people naturally connecting it with the church of of England.

At this early day the question of slavery was agitated. I quote from the will of your Great Grandfather, Rev. Wm. P. Biddle, written in 1820:

“I will that Isabel, Owen and Lillie be made and set free the first court after January. Isabel belonged to my Grandfather and lived with him a faithful servant and has greatly assisted me. Lillie nursed me and belonged to my parents; I desire her to be free. At the end of five years I desire Eli to be free, for there are few such servants for faithfulness and merit. I wish all my other servants to be hired out for ten years, after which time I will that all who are now twenty-one years of age shall be free, except Lewis and Wiley—then I will that all the balance shall be hired out for ten years from that time, which bings the year 1847; then I most earnestly wish that all shall be free. I wish that in this, and the former freeing they may be tendered to the Colonization Society of Virginia, they shall be settled in the most eligible place in Africa or in the South West of our continent. I will that all of twenty-one years of age shall receive from my estate six months’ education.”

My Mother had a beautiful Arabian mare given



her by General Simpson, which carried her many miles, both on pleasure and duty. Her father, the old minister, had very strict ideas about bringing up children, and sometimes when she would be ready for a journey, her capes, which her own hands had been weeks in embroidering, beautifully done up, and packed with dainty things in her bag, she smilingly ready to mount her horse, he would tell her she need not go, he preferred her remaining at home, without giving any reason at all. This was discipline, and with never a thought of rebelling, she would cheerfully acquiesce. I scarcely thing that girls of the present day would be so amiable. I am sure I would not. This dear old grandfather, General Simpson, though possessed of ample means, had these same ideas about discipling youth; he offered my mother a fine hat if she would make him a set of shirts, which she did, every thread pulled, and every stitch taken by her dear hands, it took weeks to make them, as there were no sewing machines in those days. General Simpson was a very handsome old man, tall, with piercing black eyes and white hair tied in a queue, which he wore to the day of his death. In earlier life he wore knee breeches, silk stockings and silver buckles.

#### **LETTER IV.**

DEAR CHILDREN:—My Father's health began to fail very soon after I was born and the physicians advised a trip to the Green Briar White Sulphur Springs in Virginia. How well I remember the journey there, though only four years old; it took three weeks to make it and we went in our own carriage. John Brimage, a bright little man, was our driver. Buck and Rock, our sturdy horses, took us safely along



and we arrived there one lovely evening in June. In a short while Father began to decline rapidly, and on the 6th of July, 1845, passed away. I followed the path up the lonely mountain side and he was laid away under a big oak tree, where the bleak winds of winter and the soft breezes of summer keep up a sacred vigil. I have so much desired to visit this hallowed spot, but the changes which this cruel war has made has prevented that and much else I desired to do. We had a tomb stone hauled in a wagon from Richmond. I mention this that you may see how difficult transportation was in those days.

I want you to understand, dear children, that a self-made man is the noblest work of God; your Grandfather was very unhappy when a little boy, his stepfather was cruel to him, so although but ten years of age, he ran away from home. You can imagine how well he succeeded, when I tell you that at the age of eighteen, he was sent in charge of a large sailing vessel to the West Indies. This same vessel ran the blockade successfully and brought out a cargo of rum and molasses, which netted his employer many thousands of dollars.

Mr. Lovejoy, whose name is well known, throughout the South, was brought here through the instrumentality of your Grandfather, the little boy of whom I have been telling you; afterwards, he moved to Raleigh, through the influence of your other Grandfather, John H. Bryan, whose eight sons he prepared for Chapel Hill.

And now I return to Woodlawn for a while. The house was situated about the middle of the plantation and was approached by a long, straight avenue of



piners for a mile or two. How beautiful were the long drives up and down! There were so many successions of interest on a plantation. The drives to the landing where large flats were being filled with cotton and corn for market, such fun driving the gin horses round and round, and rolling down huge hills of cotton seed, and watching the looms weave thick, strong cloth for winter use. What a jolly time was hog killing, the delicious hams put up by a receipt handed down from father to son and quite equal to the Smithfield. The great pots of boiling lard with a bay leaf thrown in for perfume, several huge blocks of wood in the yard and fat smiling mammies with red bandannas on their heads, singing sweet old negro melodies, and chopping up sausage meat. The tom thumb is a thing of the past, so seldom eaten now.

Christmas, what a time of good cheer! the most delightful season of the whole year. The turpentine hands came home then, with plenty of money in their pockets, made from extra work. Such getting married, midnight suppers and dances, visiting other plantations, and careless happy living, with not a thought for the future. How cunning I thought the little darkey babies, what a privilege to sit in old Aunt Rachel's cabin, and rock the cradles—first one and then another; the mothers brought them to be taken care of while they were in the fields. The two big oak trees, the well from which water was being drawn, the cool pleasant lane, in which the little darkies and dogs played, were much more enjoyable than the present-day sports of the negro. Sometimes on the streets now I meet a darkey to whom I have given a name. This very afternoon I



had a very gracious bow from "Edward Stanley." I learned to sew by making the babies I had named clothes, and I am not ashamed even now of my sewing. This era of sewing machines has in a great measure ruled out the old-fashioned hem-stitching, over-casting, herin-boning, darning and so on.

Of course you will understand that traveling done in those days was on horseback, gig, private carriage, and stage coach. The horn blew as the stage approached town, the horses came in with a gallop, every head was at a window, everybody flew to the post-office to ask the news, and such an important time it was.

### LETTER V.

DEAR CHILDREN:—When I was a little girl at Woodlawn, six years old, I had a teacher, Miss Wallingford, from Lowell, Mass. She came to us in poor health and great distress of mind; her lover had either died or deserted her. She was treated with great kindness; our seamstress was put to work making garments for her; she was helped in many ways and her grateful letters continued to come for some years after her return to Lowell.

In the dear old Dixie days, and before that, company was considered a great treat, the best room, best food and heartiest welcome awaited them. I have the tenderest recollections of "Auld Lang Syne." The old-fashioned house in which I was born with the low windows opening on a broad veranda with steps into the flower garden, in the center of which stood a huge fringe tree, roses and bright flowers clustered around. Then a gate into the vegetable garden, Oh! what veg-



etables, fruits and berries, we had in succession month by month. There were goose-berry and currant bushes, two large asparagus beds, and everything in such perfect order.

Our cook, Rachel, whose equal in preparing savory dishes I have never seen, was fond of imbibing too freely of "mountain rye" at times, and such fun I had in placing a big black doll in the path of the kitchen, to hear her clap her hands and cry, "De debil is gwine to git me sho!" Later when the poor old woman was an inmate of the Poor House, I sent her a weekly allowance of coffee and sugar.

When Amy, my black mammy died, I was sent for, and mingled my tears along with the dusky mourners about her coffin. In great contrast indeed, to this one day just after my return home after the close of the war and during that awful reconstruction period, I was walking along quietly on Broad street, when a fat buxon mulatto wench came up to me, and shaking her fist in my face ordered me off the side-walk. I quickly looked up and seeing no white person visible, and the streets full of negroes, as a church had just emptied itself into the streets, I stepped aside into the gutter and went home. I will not tell what I thought on that occasion.

We left the low country in the summer and remained until frost, which generally took place in October, and oh! what fun the three days going to the hills was. The railroad was not built through the western part of the State, so the people of the tide-water section went to Hillsboro, Oxford, Warrenton, Jones and Shocco Springs. Old Frank Johnson's band discoursed sweet music. Frank was a slave who hired



his time from his master, and with half a dozen sons equally musical, was known and sought after throughout the middle of the State. It took us three days to make the journey from our home to Shocco Springs. I got awfully tired and restless being shut up in a close carriage for that length of time, but we had regular places to stop on our way to and fro, and the noon-day stop by the side of a shady tree on the roadside was restful.

The refined and cultivated society which frequented Jones and Shocco Springs cannot be excelled. The large dancing hall was filled nightly with belles and beaux; how well I remember the green lawn, the half dozen swings suspended from the limbs of the oak tree, the band stand from which Frank Johnson's band sent forth its inspiring music; the candy stand presided over by Oscar Alston, and everybody so kind and pleasant.

Last winter, while spending a few days with a cousin of mine, I met at church a friend who belonged to the days of my childhood, and who brought back so vividly those journeys up and down the country. She told me her history since I had met her, which is so interesting that I write it here for your benefit. Not long before the Civil War she married a young Doctor and lived happily and comfortably on a large farm with their slaves. One colored boy, who went with the Doctor on his round of professional visits, was especially attached to them. When Sherman's bummers came along, they were drunken and unmanageable and ordered the negroes to leave the place, which they all did but this boy; he refused and the bummers ordered him to be shot. Preparations were made to



carry out this order; he was placed in position, when my friend ran and put her body in front of him and told these lawless creatures that they would have to shoot her also. They finally left without performing the threat. In a few years the Doctor died, the negro went North to seek his fortune, and the widow, feeling no security in the country, moved into a town to live. The boy became quite prosperous and finally opened a men's furnishing shop in Boston. He returned South, bought the old plantation and offered it to his mistress for her life time. He asked her to visit his city, offering to entertain her at any hotel, and he sends her a check every three months.

Our faithful servant, Hollen, was without an equal in my opinion. She was a most beautiful seamstress, there was nothing in the way of fine work she could not do. I have known her to be a week in making a pair of pantlettes for me, "ladder stitch," and herinbone always being used to put the insertion together. She said, "I do not feel free unless I go North"—I advised her to go and she secured a home with a Mr. and Mrs. White, at Chepachet, R.I. They were, as many others at that time, interested in asking how the negroes were treated by their owners in slavery times. So on long winter nights Hollen would regale them with tales of our plantation life, and their surprise was great when they found how kind we were to the slaves. No subject has ever been so misrepresented as has this one. I corresponded with Mrs. White and when my oldest boy went to Bingham School, I sent her his picture in uniform; she showed the picture to Mr. White, and a few days after I received a letter from him offering to adopt my son and do a good part by him, as he was



childless and wealthy. I was much pleased but I had given up too much to give up my boy also.

Quite a noted colored man was Arthur Simmons, who served as janitor of the "White House" through the term of four Presidents. He belonged to Mr. Attmore, of New Bern, North Carolina, who was a great friend of mine when I was a young lady, and many a waiter of dainties, interesting books, birds and squirrels did he bring me. You can imagine how my meeting him at Washington some years ago brought up many recollections of the past. My son was with me and Arthur could not do enough to make our visit interesting. In passing through several of the rooms we met a gentleman who proved to be the Secretary of War, Alger. After our departure, he said to Arthur "Who was that lady and gentleman who seemed glad to see you and to whom you were so very polite?" Arthur told him with much gusto, and Mr. Alger replied, "We Northern people must have misunderstood the friendly relation that existed between master and slave."

## LETTER VI.

DEAR CHILDREN:—

Another event occurred which brings up the lowly Christian character of my Mother. Among our slaves was one named Reuben. I had lost sight of him during the war; one day not long since the door bell rang and the servant said there was a colored man at the door who wished to speak to me. I found it was Reuben, who told me he had been a very bad man since he was free, and that he was only then out of the Penitentiary. He said, "I have had time to think and I have



determined to be a better man. I have thought a great deal about my old missus, how she used to read the Bible and pray for us, and as she is gone, I concluded to tell you my resolution." I shook hands with him and wished him God speed. I have not heard if he adhered to his resolution.

Since the war, on one occasion when my Mother and I were on our way to the seashore, a nice looking man came up and spoke to my mother. She failed to recognize him, when he said, "What, do you not remember the poor student whose tuition you paid, to whom you gave comfort in many ways and helped by your advice and prayers to lead a good life?" I recall this as one of the many instances of my dear Mother's charity. I read a dear little book once, written by Miss Mullock, called "My Mother and I," which described the relations between us. Never was there sweeter sympathy than between this Mother and daughter.

We made many pleasure trips to the Northern cities before the War, and always took a maid, and as one of our own slaves would have produced unpleasant complications, Bettie, a daughter of old Oscar Alston was our attendant. I have a dim recollection of a fall spent in Philadelphia where my Mother was under the care of the celebrated Dr. Hodges. We boarded with a Quaker lady named Sedgswick. I remember that on each side of her fire-place was a cupboard in which she kept cakes and sweet meats, and try as hard as I could, my childish arms were too short to reach them. I made a later visit to this same city and had a very humiliating experience. One Sunday afternoon I was walking on one of the streets with some North Carolina friends. Just as we got opposite a large church,



a Sunday School turned out, the children looked at me and seemed to find great amusement in commenting on my attire. I turned very red and wondered what could be the matter, as also did my companions. After returning to the hotel I found that the reign of pantlettes was over, I had worn mine just a few weeks too long.

## LETTER VII.

DEAR CHILDREN:—I quote from a letter written in 1837 from New York:

“Dearly Esteemed Friend: Pardon me that I have delayed this long in writing to you, it has not been from want of inclination, but solely on account of troubles and vexations incident to travelers at this time of the year. After leaving your kind and hospitable mansion, we pursued our weary way through snow and mud to Tarboro, found little of interest there. Next day we had a very agreeable passenger in the person of a Mr. Branch to a place called Scotland Neck. He much amused us in relating occurrences and old reminiscences of the country through which we passed. We arrived safe at Halifax, passing on by way of Blakely to Petersburg, through an incessant rain, though the statecoach was quite dry. Had a gentleman passenger who was very amusing, he could quote poetry, sing songs and talk Latin and Greek; they were of his own productions, he said, and quite witty descriptions of former sweethearts. He parted from us at Richmond. Of all places I am less pleased with this than any other of like importance; it is a muddy, dirty, dusty place, and we did not see buildings of much importance. An excellent railroad took



up to Fredericksburg, and we were glad to be hurried away from a place we were anxious to leave. Here saw only the monument erected to Mary, the mother of Washington, and viewed that only in the distance; it was impossible to get nearer on account of the muddy roads. Then we took a stage coach to Washington City, which is sixty-five miles distant; it took us two days to reach there, the traveling horrid, passed many interesting spots, Mount Vernon, also Creek Church where General Washington used to attend. It is an ancient brick building, nothing interesting or striking about it; though we gazed at all these places as though determined to find something to say about them not familiar to everyone, but in vain, as the subject has long been exhausted.

“Alexandria was once a place of much importance, beautifully situated on the Potomac, but it seems to be rapidly going back to its original element—from thence, almost all the seven miles to the great city in view before us, was filled with many and celebrated places, we crossed the Potomac on a bridge one and one quarter miles long. Could not get any accommodations at the hotels, but finally found a very nice boarding house; we then sallied out to see some of the wonders of the place. To attempt a description of what you have often seen and heard would be useless, we spent one day in the Senate Chamber, the early part in the House, and other in going to see the far-famed East Room with all its splendors. We were denied the gratification of seeing the old General (he was indisposed). Saw in the Navy Department the portraits of all the Indian delegates that have ever visited this city, it was indeed amusing, and that of



itself is sufficient to amply compensate one for all the discomforts of the trip. It was truly a sight at which one could gaze, but not describe. I think you would enjoy a visit to Washington at this season of the year, February; a very cold place it is when walking up the great grand avenue. The capitol is a splendid building; saw much beauty and fashion, and many of our great men. From Baltimore we come across to Philadelphia by land, in one day, a hard rain, the roads were bad; the gentleman passengers, sixteen in number, walked and slid, while I rode, mounted on the baggage sleigh, drawn by an old gray horse, who was not as much pleased with the sport as myself; and finally reaching home in New York without any accident, for so great a blessing, I trust we are thankful. We stopped at the American Hotel first and now are pleasantly fixed at 213 Fulton street, west-side. I have a front room, am seated before a nice grate with a bright fire burning cheerfully, am very comfortable, so much so as to almost forget it is snowing and storming outdoors. Board is much more expensive than when we left New York in November; we now pay twelve dollars per week; house rent is enormous, too high for us to take a house this spring. I found my niece, Elizabeth Clute, at home and engaged to be married to a young gentleman from England; he is only twenty-four, she is sixteen, too young I think; the match is pleasing to all, they are to be married in St. John's Church, great preparations are being made for the ceremony. There has been but a few pleasant days since our return home; very muddy walking. Yesterday was like a Spring day. Broadway appeared fine, such gay things of elegantly dressed ladies, every variety of costume. I wish for you, my dear Mrs. Nor-



cott, indeed I never walk out on a pleasant day, without wishing for you. Wish we all were with you, if only for one day, to have a good old-fashioned chat and enjoy your good society; trust I shall have that pleasure in New York in a time not far distant. I assure you of the grateful sense we have of all your kindness and polite attention and that of your friends, to us, the remembrance of it will never be erased from our memory. Farewell, and God bless you dear friends."

This is one of the many letters I found in my Mother's trunk after her death.

"They never quite leave us, our friends who have  
passed,  
Through the shadows of death—to the sunlight  
above,  
A thousand sweet memories are holding them fast,  
To the places they blessed with their presence and  
love."

Myrtle Villa, April 27, 1908.

### LETTER VIII.

DEAR CHILDREN:—I had led such a happy roving life that my education was sadly neglected, so when I was thirteen years old, I was put in a boarding school, and my Mother, who was recovering from a severe attack of illness, was taken to the Greenbriar White Sulphur Springs. My experience at this school was very sad indeed; the teacher became offended with me in some way and made my life miserable. She told some of the girls I was not in good health, and if I died, she had decided what dress to put on me, and as I



would take a dress which had been fashioned so tenderly by my Mother's hands from my trunk, I would wonder if that was the one chosen for that sad occasion.

But my most delightful experience, and which quite made up for anything bad that had gone before, was my school life at Washington City. This was a select school, kept by an English lady, Mrs. Kingsford. I had such lovely school mates, I correspond with some of them now. We attended President Buchanan's levees, admired Miss Lane's graciousness, took walks to the Capitol and heard great speeches, went to art galleries, and best of all had an informal soiree every month at the school, to which our sweethearts always managed to come. I had my first real love affair then, Mr. Corcoran's nephew was the subject, and how we managed to evade the teachers and pass notes even at the church door, is a mystery to me even now. I read Miss Clay's book lately about the times then and many of the names are very familiar. Macon Thompson, son of the Secretary of Interior, married my roommate and their beautiful daughter lives in Kentucky. I shall never forget Mrs. Kingsford's gooseberry and pie plant pies, especially as each pie was divided into eight pieces and we were only allowed one piece. Her plum puddings, made by English receipt, were dreams; she would give no one the formula; twelve were made and one cooked each week until used up. The boxes of good things I received from home were something to be remembered; gold cake and fruit cake, great packages of home-made candy, jelly, nuts and everything nice one could think of, and with every taste of the food I had a loving thought of my Mother. Some-



times the teacher would take us to Baltimore on a lark and once we went on the steamer to Mount Vernon. Then at our commencement at the Smithsonian Institute, I made the one triumph of my life, which was due to the fact that the subject of my composition—"A Trip Through Time's Spy Glass" was a pleasant hit at the girls.

My school days ended, I became a young lady. I was so happy, the world was so beautiful, every one was so kind, that I smiled all the time. Life held nothing but roses and sunshine for me, and with the most indulgent and intelligent Mother in the world, I had nothing to desire.

I enjoyed my winter at home immensely, the freedom from school was delightful, went to parties, took sails on the river, danced the dear old dances, Virginia Reel, Lancers, Cotillion and waltzed in a dignified way, played Consequences, Stage Coach, Grand Mufto, and so on, and at home Backgammon with Mother.

Then the summer at the Virginia Springs, mostly spent at the Alleghany, Montgomery White Sulphur and Yellow Sulphur, the most bewitching spot in all that lovely country. Oh! how I did ride horseback and drive in those days, it seems to me the horses were better then than now.

Then in October, we went to New York and stayed at the St. Nicholas; I had several months before this become engaged to your Father. We met many Spring acquaintances in New York and had a royal good time. I had lovely clothes and what dreams of beauty my dresses were, and how unconscious I was of any per-



sonal charm, if I possessed any, or anything else except to be happy all the day long.

In November I was married to your Father. We spent two months visiting the Southern cities, New Orleans, Mobile, Montgomery, Selma and other places. I enjoyed the French Theatre, and the quaint old things about New Orleans very much. The slave market I did not like, that was really the only objectionable thing about slavery, the being bought and sold. We met many of your Father's Chapel Hill college friends, and the voyage of six days from Memphis down the Mississippi on the steamer Ingomar was an experience. There were seven brides and grooms on board. I was much disappointed at the appearance of the "Father of Waters," it can't compare with our own beautiful Neuse, it is much muddier and deeper, and the color of the water cruel and dark. Many beating hearts and happy voices have been stilled beneath its waters.

While we were staying at the St. Nicholas in New York, I met an exceedingly handsome girl from South Carolina named Victoria Jordan. We were getting our wedding trousseaus at the same time, and she and her young husband followed on our same route down the Mississippi about a week later; the steamer took fire and many perished, among them our friends. As the fire approached that part of the boat on which they were standing, and the scorching heat became unbearable, they clasped hands, took one last lingering kiss and plunged into a watery grave.

We had a gay time at New Orleans, went there twice, stopping both times at the St. Charles. The French Theater was fine, and the Levees along the



river very interesting; met several acquaintances; one Chapel Hill student, a friend of my husband's, had had a quarrel with his sweetheart, which I tried in vain to reconcile.

Mobile was charming with the wide shady streets and bay glimmering in the sunshine, the sweet old homes and the dear people. I met Edith Whitfield there. The home of her father, General Nathan Whitfield at Demopolis was something to remember, a plantation containing nine hundred slaves, all polite and happy, a lovely house with everything in it heart could desire, a ball-room, the white pillars reaching to the ceiling, broad verandas, a sweet place in which to while away the sultry hours, a lake in front, surrounded by evergreens, on which swam swans and ducks. We were in the midst of a freshet on the Alabama river, for miles the earth was covered with water, people going about in boats, and the steamer could only be guided in its course by the line of trees on the river banks; I was quite cured of any desire to live there.

After two months spent in pleasant meandering, we returned to North Carolina and settled down to the every-day life of married people. In '61 my little boy, Norcott, was presented to me and he filled out my full measure of happiness, how fondly we stood over his cradle, and Mammy Amy, who had nursed me, declared he was a wonder; we called his name, watched each look and smile, admired his cute little ways and thought there never was such a wonderful baby. I am sure there never was such a fond young Mother. His carriage and other presents were on the last vessel that came from New York before the blockade.



## LETTER IX.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:—The winter of '61 was a most anxious one, we did not know what would be the result of so much political agitation. In the meantime, work was continued at Woodlawn. Soon we heard news that Fort Sumpter had fallen, then people began to talk of war and went to raising companies and regiments. New Bern, being in an exposed position, it was thought best for as many women and children as could leave to do so. In March, '62 the battle of New Bern occurred and such a time of confusion and trouble! We had had extra dinners prepared, expecting to feed the Confederate soldiers. Instead of that, there was a perfect panic and stampede, women, children, nurses, and baggage getting to the depot any way they could. Our home and hundreds of others were left with the dinners cooking, doors open and everything to give our Northern friends a royal feast, which I understand they thoroughly enjoyed.

Our house was nicely furnished, a year's provisions in the smokehouse, in the pantry all sorts of jellies, pickles, catsups, cordials and so on, and we panic-stricken, running away with a few trunks of hastily packed clothing.

Some sad and ludicrous scenes occurred. One lady from the West, whose son was a sick soldier, as a last resort, got the boy lifted in an ox-cart, and came driving up to the depot as the train pulled out, and finally pushed him on the rear platform.

I will remark here, that when we returned home at the close of the war, we found our beautiful and valued farm an abandoned plantation, even the cedar



trees that divided the fields, had been cut down, the nice comfortable negro cabins had been dismantled, as also the barns and outhouses, the old Colonial brick dwelling, made of bricks brought from England, was razed to the ground. Houses, cattle, sheep, of course, gone, and an apple orchard of choice apples destroyed.

The refugees, as a general thing, were not cordially received by the up-country people. We went to several places before finally settling, to Greensboro, Lexington, and lastly to a tiny farm four miles from Raleigh. The house was a log cabin, with a shed and low upsairs room, but we were very thankful to get to this place; it was a haven of rest. My beautiful boy had left me ere this, succumbing to an attack of fever. He was buried with another baby boy in a corner of the cemetery at Greensboro. We have never been able to find his little body to this day. We soon collected comforts about us at this country place, had a nice garden, plenty of milk and butter. My Mother's room, under the roof, partook of her presence, the white table was covered with snow-white dimity, the four window-panes had a muslin curtain, her wrapper and slippers were near, and on a stand by the bed, were her well-worn Bible and Hymnal. Many a pleasant hour I spent with her there, her sweet individuality pervading every space. She had nothing left but her prayers, which were offered to God three times a day, and always in the gloaming. We had constant communication with Raleigh, the news of terrible battles in which our nearest and dearest were either wounded or killed, kept up very unhappy. It was hard to get provisions, everything that could be spared was sent to the army. Both your Grandmothers were kept busy



knitting socks for the soldiers, we cut up carpets for blankets, and sent blankets also, and used comfortables in their place; boxes went off every day filled with necessary things for our boys.

I made a good deal of money of which I was very proud. I had several suits of brown woollen goods for gentlemen's wear made in my own loom. I had a present of a number of bolts of yellow homespun from the Rockfish factory, which I exchanged to great advantage. I made neckties and other fancy things and sold them, and often had several thousand dollars of Confederate money in my purse. I cut up a Marshal sash and made money out of that. I had a shoe last and made my little daughter many pairs of shoes out of goat skins, bound with ribbon.

One night, we had quite an experience in our country home. My Mother came from her room above and said there were strange noises in the yard, the negroes were singing "Hurrah! Hurrah! We are free! We are free!" We sprang out of bed very much frightened, dressed ourselves, made a fire in the huge chimney place and anxiously waited for what was to come. We peeped out of the narrow window, and there, sure enough, were many negroes singing and dancing around the fire, with every demonstration of joy, and every little while we heard the fife and drum. Our feelings cannot be described. I looked at my daughter sleeping so peacefully in her crib and thought that before morning the last of my race would be swept away; at my patient invalid Mother, what a death for her to die! and perhaps that very night, none of us would be left to tell the tale. But the night of horror wore on— and the morning



dawned peaceful and bright with no evidence of the mortal agony we had endured. We found that the negroes had been having an unusual time with some of the neighboring people and the supposed drum and fife was the creaking of the well bucket.

We had plenty of company in our refugee home, friends would find us out; and conversation was of the war and its consequences. Our most frequent visitor was Fred, or Freddie, as every member of his family called him. He was your Father's youngest brother, a lovely intelligent lad of 16; his greatest recreation was to play backgammon with Mother. He had been sent to Col. Tew's school at Hillsboro and the hard barracks life was too much for his delicate constitution; he needed remedies which could not be had in the Confederacy for we were strongly blockaded then. He then went to Chapel Hill, the last of eight brothers who had graduated there with distinction. His health failed rapidly, but so anxious was he to continue his studies that none realized his condition until his friend wrote of it. He came home and continued lessons under dear old Doctor Mason, and it was then we saw so much of him.

The War seemed to derange every part of society, death and carnage in the army, sickness and losses at home.

### **LETTER X.**

DEAR CHILDREN:—About this time, we succeeded in getting in Raleigh a small house of four rooms; we built a log pantry and rented a kitchen on the next lot. You could hardly believe how much company we entertained there; an extra bed was put in



the parlor on many occasions. While we were at our country home a pathetic incident had happened. Scarlet fever broke out and many, both white and black, died. I was sitting by the fire in our cabin when Olly, a very good servant, came in the room with a sick baby in her arms; it grew rapidly worse, and as I took it from her, the breath left its little body. I was completely unnerved; my little son had been taken away and the girl was a delicate baby and I knew how deadly a disease scarlet fever was. I had the carriage ordered, put a few things in a traveling bag, took nurse and baby and started away, I knew not whither; toward dark we drew up at a country place near Wake Forest where my aunt was refugeeing. Before descending from the carriage, I told her from what I was fleeing, but before I could finish, her big heart opened, her big arms took us in, and we were welcome.

We bought a barrel of sugar and some pounds of coffee, which we doled out very carefully, using sorghum—the very taste is distasteful to me—and mixing parched rye and sweet potatoes with the coffee.

We had so many relations and friends in the army that we were always anxious. Georgie, who was next older than Freddie, was especially attractive. He graduated at Chapel Hill in 1860, and was offered a Greek tutorship, which he accepted. He was only eighteen years old, his only thought was books and religion; he cared nothing for politics, and intended to study for the Episcopal ministry. But the cruel war had to take him, as it did thousands of our bravest and best. George was made a captain in the 2nd N. C. Cavalry and fought gallantly until he lost his life in the summer of 1864. Never shall I forget that



dreadful day when the telegram came announcing that he fell leading his men, and with the last words: "I am killed, boys, I wish I could live to take those works." Before this, George was taken prisoner in a skirmish around Fredericksburg; he received a severe wound in the head and was left on the field for dead; after a while it rained and he recovered, crawled under a stone wall and was there captured by a Federal soldier. He was taken to Washington and put in prison. He suffered much with his wound; some Southern ladies there were very kind to him and sent him flowers, which were a great pleasure to him.

After several months he was taken out and sent to Johnson's Island, a bleak inhospitable place on Lake Erie. The prison was made of boards placed up and down and the cold winds whistled through the cracks. He would have frozen but for a warm overcoat sent him through the lines, which he wore night and day. In the middle of the room in which he slept there was a small stove. Some of the prisoners sat on the bench nearest the stove, another set of prisoners sat on a bench a little removed, and the third walked around to keep from freezing; they would alternate so as to let each one have some warmth. If there was an unusually warm spell of weathr, the men made pillows of sticks and wood, which in colder, were burned. The fare was miserable. I was told by a soldier that he saw two Confederate soldiers fight over a bone until one killed the other; lives were sacrificed needlessly in many ways in those days. After nine months, George was exchanged, and his coming home was a time of heartfelt rejoicing. One could well be proud of this handsome soldier, so tall and straight in his



Confederate uniform; the gold bands, brass buttons, and waving black plumes in the hat, made the costume complete. We reverently lifted the brown hair and looked at the cruel wound. Coming to the warm climate soon affected the wound and we begged in vain that some home appointment be given him until the summer was over, but he was sent to the front. He went into battle on August 16th, 1864; he mounted his black horse and rode to death. His remains were buried on some man's farm, six miles from Richmond. There in the corner of the fence with only his oilcloth around him, with only the birds to sing a requiem and the leaves to wave in pity, lies one of the bravest hearts that ever offered up his life for a true but lost cause.

### LETTER XI.

DEAR CHILDREN:—One warm day in April, a great many ladies and children were assembled in the public square in Raleigh, near the Capitol, all anxious to hear the news; disquieting rumors reached us—it was impossible to remain at home. Suddenly there was a commotion, some one said “It is reported that Lee has surrendered”—such consternation on the faces of the people, then as the news became more general, such weeping and wringing of hands, such heavy hearts—privation, sorrow, death, defeat and poverty.

There had been a terrible battle at Gettysburg, and our bravest and best were slain, like sheep. Colonel Hughes, Harry Burgwyn, Jimmie Howard and numberless others were killed. Your Father's first cousin, General Pettigrew, was killed, James and Sam Biddle had been in many terrible battles, everything



was very sad; the skies were gloomy, the sun shone through a mist, a dark pall enveloped the land—the land of sunshine and flowers.

Our Junior Reserves were ordered out, boys of sixteen. I lost heart then; it was pitiful to see the dear little fellows, hopeful and glad, marching to the tune of Dixie—alas! so many of them to death.

Raleigh was now filled with wounded and disabled soldiers; the churches and every available space turned into hospitals. I did what I could, but it seemed nothing. The Episcopal church being nearer to me, I went there mostly; many poor men were on the benches, some in high delirium, some in the agony of death. A young soldier passed away, none knew his name or home; as the coffin lid was being screwed down, a dear old lady pressed her lips to his brow, and said, “Let me kiss him for his Mother.” Every heart responded and all eyes were filled with tears. Volumes of heart-rending and pathetic incidents could be written of our four years’ cruel war. Although we were becoming less hopeful, yet the Fall of the Confederacy was unexpected at the last.

Soon our troops began to pass through, weary, dirty fellows, and hungry also, every one that could, fed them; they could not stop but in passing, we stood at the gate and handed them bread and ham; they were marching to the tune of Dixie, the war song that we vainly thought was to lead them to victory. Our soldiers retreated towards Hillsboro, the Federal soldiers pursuing. One reckless Confederate soldier from Texas was in the rear guard; he fired on a Yankee soldier, so close were the pursuers to the pursued. After firing he turned and put spurs to his horse, but unfor-



tunately, his horse stumbled, and he was captured. The next morning, under a guard of soldiers, he was carried by our home, (I looked on with anguished heart) to the grove back of your Grandfather's, and hung to the limb of a huge tree, under which your uncles and aunts had played in childhood. It was a gloomy, rainy night when the Federal troops and bummers entered Raleigh. About midnight I had a call to the room in which my sick mother was staying. In answering I had to pass through an entry that had in it a glass door. I glanced towards the glass door, and there peeping in was one of the most repulsive looking red-haired creatures I ever saw. I was so frightened I could hardly stand, and I can't remember to this day which room I reached first.

A very old lady refugeed from here during the war, was far away at a little village at the head waters of the Neuse. One day she was sadly walking by the stream when she saw a leaf borne swiftly on its current toward the home of her love. She went to the little cottage, and wrote a long piece of poetry about the incident, I quote two verses:

“A leaf upon the flowing tide may pass unheeded  
by my side,  
So though I know its floating free may reach the  
spot so dear to me,  
Securely there, without a fear of hostile man or  
winter drear,  
May nestle in the silver sand that covers dear old  
Neuse's strand.

Oh, let me once again behold our homes endeared



to us of old,  
The temple consecrate to Thee where we may  
breathe with spirits free,  
To seek the peace for us in store and worship there  
in truth once more,  
The old familiar paths to tread and lay us by our  
sleeping dead.”

We had begun to get quite comfortably fixed in our refugee home, when Raleigh was captured. Of course we asked for a guard or our house would have been sacked. As it was, everything was taken that possibly could be. Our fine cow was killed and only a steak cut from her side; the horse was killed also and a little colt left which we fed from a bottle. I held on to my garden and gave your Father \$10 which I had sold vegetables for, to return to New Bern on. Mr. John C. Washington, of Kinston, an old and influential citizen, had been put in jail, and the first thing your father did after reaching home was to secure his release. We returned home in '65 and such hand-shaking and thankfulness to meet after all we had gone through! So many missing faces, so many vacant places, so much poverty, and hardship, yet so many thankful hearts that our lives were spared.

Everybody adjusted themselves to their changed circumstances and went to work to repair their shattered fortunes. The after effects were as trying as the war itself, the disgusting Reconstruction period was a disgrace to all concerned. We submitted to the inevitable, the freeing of our slaves, the ruthless destruction of our dearly loved plantations, the pillage of our



homes, and then all we asked was to be let alone and rebuild as our judgment told us was for the best.

Reconstruction times as you may well know, was trying to men's souls, "getting back into the Union" was a favorite expression, and in some ways these times were worse even than the war.

The Ku Klux organization was a power for good in our land. Their allegiance was to the Caucasian race, and "Mothers and daughters were their patron saints."

I took great interest in one young man. He was a fine looking fellow and was much in love with a cousin of mine. He was fearless and bold like most of our dear Southern boys, and was a member of this organization. In some way he was captured, tried and convicted by a bogus court held during these times, and sent to a Northern prison. His feet were manacled and he was put to hard labor. He remained several years. When he returned to his native State, he lived a life of usefulness and honor, until called to his reward. The loving inscription on his tomb-stone in the cemetery in Raleigh, attests how dear he was to the hearts of the people, and Randolph Shotwell's name will not be forgotten.

## LETTER XII.

DEAR CHILDREN:— Before closing these crude reminiscences, I must tell you a little of the Colonial times of our ancient parish and dear old town. I went to Fort Barnwell, and in some barrels that had been stored away in the garret for many, many years, I found many old letters and interesting documents, commissions given by Colonial Governors Tryon, Mar-



tin, and Arthur Dobbs, old wills, bills of sale, orders for goods from England, everything in pounds, shillings and pence; letters from attorneys in Boston and all sorts of interesting matter which gives us an insight, which could not be obtained in any other way, of the manner in which our forefathers lived, occupied their time, and finally died.

In Colonial times the Clermont plantation was very celebrated. It was first owned by a Madam Moore who had been married three times. She boasted that the first marriage was for honor, the second for money, and the third for love. She was a great "swell" and the house in which she lived, and of whose destruction I have already told you, was a very grand affair. She rowed to town in a boat manned by six slaves dressed in livery; she occupied a stall in the Episcopal Church, and had as her guests, Washington and Monroe. On the place are buried two of our governors, father and son—the Spaightes.

Just after our return to New Bern we were told of a dream had by a Federal soldier, which was very peculiar to say the least. The soldier had just arrived from the North, and had never seen that part of the country or heard of that particular place. He saw the brick house clearly before his eyes and was told to go there, descend to the cellar, advance to the fireplace, look for a loose brick behind which he would find a key—at this point his dream was interrupted, but so impressed was he by what he had dreamed, that he obtained permission from the officer in charge, and went to the old mansion, went in the cellar, found the loose brick and took from behind it a key. What did he find? In those Colonial days, there were no banks,



and the supposition is that the key unlocked a strong box sunk beneath the bricks which formed the floor of the cellar; it was often the custome to have some place for valuables and gold. The soldier however, was unsuccessful in locating the strong box.

In visiting the old Simpson burial ground in Pitt county a few years ago, I was much interested in examining an old house near by; it is now inhabited by negroes; it is a very quaint affair and was occupied during Colonial times by some officer of the English Government who had charge of the funds. One side of the house was almost entirely brick, having two very large chimneys, and not being divided until nearly to the roof, near the top were the letters I. H. S. in black brick; the chimneys extended into the earth and contained large closets securely fastened. The I. H. S. denoted that the building was used for a chapel.

There is a miniature which I often gaze at as it recalls a love story of the ancient days when New Bern was a small village, and the Academy the seat of learning.

Eliza Cray, who lived at Fort Barnwell, was visiting in this town. She was engaged to a young man named Barron, who was her sweetheart from childhood. Staying in the same house in which she was visiting, was an artist, who had come to the South to spend the winter for his health; he thought Eliza was so exceedingly beautiful that he painted her miniature by stealth, and afterwards enlarged it to a full length portrait and placed it in front of his studio in New York. Eliza and Mr. Barron were married, a big old-fashioned country wedding, long to be remembered. In a few months Eliza died and the broken-hearted husband



was persuaded to travel. In the course of his wanderings, he landed in New York, and walking down Broadway came upon this picture of his dear wife; nature gave way, he fainted on the side-walk, and it was some time before he revived sufficiently to be taken to his place of abode.

Brice Creek, a beautiful meandering stream, flows into the Trent just above the town, it is named for a man; named Brice. A traitor, covenanted to sell the place on a certain day; had a last interview with the Indians in a hut across the river, on the land where now rests the bones of two of our Governors; the night was dark and rainy, fit night for such a dastardly deed. The man had completed the bargain, the Indians silently left to prepare for the massacre, of the unsuspecting inhabitants. A little white boy who had often been employed, lay on the floor, supposedly asleep, but he heard all that was said. As soon as they slept, he stole quietly out, and jumping into a row boat, made his way quickly to the town, told the people and thus saved them.

There is a legend of a white girl who was stolen by the Indians from her home on the banks of the Neuse, when a little thing, and all efforts to regain her were fruitless. Years afterwards a sad, weary-looking woman, with a baby in her arms would come to the meadow above the town and gaze wistfully upon the town. When approached, she would flee. This woman was supposed to have been the stolen child. This was about 1765.

Just after the Revolution, when peace had been declared, and everybody felt very happy that the long struggle was over and peace and prosperity reigned



in our beloved land, General George Washington made a tour of the South. He arrived at Tarboro, and General Samuel Simpson was ordered by General Thomas Blount "to take a troop of horse" and escort him to New Bern. This was done and his journey was a perfect ovation everywhere he went. Among other attractions, a ball was given him at the Gaston House, and the dancing and merry jests continued until dawn.

John Simpson, a son of the sturdy old General John, who had done so much to aid the Revolution, took a severe cold from sitting on the piazza in the cold wind blowing from the river, and died after a few days illness.

I found a letter from General Blount in the same attic to which I have before alluded. On the back in pencil were the twelve toasts drank on that occasion. Although so many years have elapsed, the writing is perfectly legible. And from the same source, a few months ago, was found in a red leather case, a lock of auburn hair, a wedding ring and the marriage certificate of Penelope McIlvain, dated 1785.

I am much impressed in traveling over this part of the country at the number of country graveyards—every large plantation has one. I can but think that Gray had them in his mind when he wrote his "Elegy."

### **LETTER XIII.**

DEAR CHILDREN:—I wish to tell you a little more about Colonial times, away back, before the War of 1776.

In the twilight of a calm December day in 1709 several small vessels having passed Roanoke Islands,



famed in song and story, as being the landing place of Sir Walter Raleigh, came to anchor on a long, narrow strip of land, lying in peaceful beauty between two majestic rivers. The willow, oak, cedar covered with climbing jessamine and bamboo, and hanging moss, smiled a welcome to these homeless people. They thanked God as the Pilgrims of Plymouth had done, for this free heritage, and set to work to build houses, make gardens, till the soil, and worship God.

For awhile things went well with these hardy settlers, driven by religious persecution to America from Germany and Switzerland, and so pleased were they with their new home, that they named the little village New Berne, after Berne, their native home in the Alps. But afterwards the Indians, who had been friendly, became jealous and one day in September, the second year of their coming, fell upon them with tomahawks and an ax and well-nigh exterminated the entire community. King Taylor, an Indian of the Chattawka Tribe owned the land on which the town is built, and was a most blood thirsty savage.

About that time Lawson, the surveyor, was burned. Then de Graffenried was captured and carried to the interior to be put to death. But a band on which was a coat of arms and a golden star saved his life. The superstitious savages took it as some kingly symbol and liberated him. Listen to what he says of his escape: "I had to foot it homeward, quite lame, shivering with cold, nearly dead, my legs so stiff and swollen I could not walk a step, but supporting myself on two sticks. At last I arrived at my small home in New Bern."

Worn out with mental and physical suffering,



De Graffenried returned to his native Alps to end his days. After a while the village took on new life and began to flourish, trade, commerce and agriculture soon raised it to a place of importance.

About the middle of the century the Royal Governors made this the capital and the Assembly convened here. But it was in the days of Tryon that New Bern reached its zenith of social brilliancy. Tryon had the people heavily taxed to build a palace, one wing of which remains to the present day. Tryon's wife and sister, Esther Wake, were society queens and for the upper classes it was the golden days of the Colonial period, and while the people were groaning under the unjust taxation, revelry and mirth held high carnival in the palace. Dainty dames and gay cavaliers walked with stately tread though the reel or minuet. The merry making was also in the houses of the wealthy merchants and planters. In some the service was sumptuous, massive silver plates having been brought from England. A lady would ride in her coach driven by liveried servants and some went in chairs borne by footmen.

This palace of which there has been so much written, was burned by an old negro woman who went into the cellar to hunt for eggs. One wing remained and in it was housed General Washington's horse when he was here in 1791.

Many of the hip-roof dwellings still remain, many of the same trees that shaded our forefathers shade us, and the same walks which we take in safety they took often in fear and trembling. The old town has passed through eras of prosperity, and of disaster, the church towers still point to Heaven now as they



did then, as the one only real source of comfort. Some days are bright and some gloomy for us as it was for them.

“So the multitude goes, like the flowers or the weed—

That withers away to let others succeed,  
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,  
To repeat every tale that has often been told.”

“For we are the same our Fathers have been,  
We see the same sights our Fathers have seen,  
We drink the same stream, and vein the same sun,  
And run the same course our Fathers have run.”

#### LETTER XIV.

DEAR CHILDREN:—And now I have left the dear old room, and am seated on the piazza in an arm chair, which is so old that I cannot remember. Looking upon the beautiful Neuse from my bamboo and vine-covered corner, watching the launches with gay crowds go by, thinking of the olden times when the Indian canoe danced gaily upon its waters, and later, when Teach, the dreadful pirate, roamed up and down at his free will and buried his treasures at well-selected places upon its banks. Retribution overtook him as it usually does those who sin and he was captured in Pamlico Sound, his head severed from his body and hung on the bowsprit of a vessel.

I look at the wall built of brick brought from England, which encloses the yard, at the huge sycamore in the corner, under which the Indians held Council before committing savage depredations upon



the innocent people, and I think as the silvery leaves bloom and fall year after year what a story they could tell of by-gone days!.

Every piece of furniture in the house is connected with a sentiment of some kind, some period of self-denial, the memory of some loved one. Something in the desk, the Bible and pictures too, bring up sweet thoughts of the past. Each tree in the yard has a history, the honey-suckle, whose perfume I breathe, now covers an old cedar tree that has been the home of a mocking bird for years; the mimosa, crape myrtle, each have a tale to tell; the wildcherry tree, with its crimson blossoms growing from a seed dropped by a bird in passing, is now as tall as the roof, and as I look up the walk, I see a curly headed grandson with his dog, Rollo, coming to wish me good-night, and I feel that life has been full of good things for me, in spite of the awful war and its attending miseries.

I could go on forever, dear Children with these memories of the past and hopes for the future, but the twilight is approaching, the moon and stars will soon be reflected in the silvery water, and the bells are calling for worship in the dear old churches, so wishing you all the blessings of this life, I will cease my Recollections of Dixie.













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